United Nations A/C.1/49/PV.15

General Assembly

Official Records

Forty-ninth Session

First Committee

15th Meeting

Wednesday, 9 November 1994, 10 a.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Valencia Rodriguez . . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Agenda items 53 to 66, 68 to 72 and 153 *(continued)*

Consideration of draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The first speaker this morning is the representative of Nigeria, who will introduce two draft resolutions.

Mr. Fasehun (Nigeria): I should like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.4, entitled "Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade". The main objective of this draft resolution is to call for an assessment of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade and a review of the same Declaration in the light of the changed international situation.

This action follows the pattern in the 1980s, when an appraisal of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade was carried out in 1985 by the Disarmament Commission in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/148 Q of 1984.

The Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade was adopted by consensus at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 1990, in its resolution 45/62 A. The Declaration dealt essentially with the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world for lasting peace and security. The Declaration recognized the determination of the international community to make progress in the 1990s by resolutely pursuing disarmament along with other efforts necessary to attain genuine peace and security. We therefore urge the United Nations to continue to foster multilateral cooperation for disarmament wherein bilateral, original efforts can be complementary and mutually supportive in attaining the purposes and principles enunciated in its Charter.

We are now in the middle of the Decade, and there have been great changes, both positive and negative, since that Declaration was issued. More than ever the international community needs to carry out an assessment of our achievements in the field of disarmament in the light of the proposed objectives in the Declaration, and, if need be, adapt its elements to the priority issues of the post-cold-war era.

It is in view of this concern that Nigeria wishes to propose for inclusion in the agenda of the 1995 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission an item entitled "Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade".

The Disarmament Commission will make a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration, as well as of the suggestions that may be put forward to ensure appropriate progress, and report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

In the first preambular paragraph of the resolution the General Assembly would recall its resolution 45/62 A of 4 December 1990, by which it adopted the text of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade and declared the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade, as recommended by the Disarmament Commission at its 1990 substantive session.

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This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief, Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178, and incorporated in a copy of the record. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

In the second, third and fourth preambular paragraphs, the General Assembly would note the changes that have occurred in the international arena since 1990, and in particular the end of the cold war and bipolar rivalries, which heralded a new era of cooperation in international relations. It would note also that the outbursts of ethnic and nationalist conflicts as well as disturbing issues in arms control and disarmament in different parts of the world can have negative implications for international peace and security.

In its operative paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, the General Assembly would undertake, at its fiftieth session, in the middle of the decade, a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade, and would therefore request the Disarmament Commission, at its 1995 session, to make a preliminary assessment of the implementation of the Declaration as well as suggestions that might be put forward to ensure appropriate progress, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

In its operative paragraphs 4 and 5, Member States would be called upon to make known their views as to areas requiring review and to submit their suggestions on such a review by 30 April 1995. We hope that Member States will seize the opportunity to make the exercise a fruitful one.

I wish also to introduce another draft resolution, entitled "United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services programme", contained in document A/C.1/49/L.12, which has been sponsored by more than 30 other countries. The draft has the same characteristics as those of past years, except for some minor and necessary updating. In particular, in the resolution the General Assembly would express its appreciation to the Governments of Finland, France, Germany, Japan and Sweden for inviting the 1994 fellows to study selected activities in the field of disarmament, thereby contributing to the fulfilment of the overall objectives of the programme.

I should like to take this opportunity to express Nigeria's appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the Centre for Disarmament Affairs for the effective and consistent manner in which the fellowship programme has been conducted year in, year out.

In conclusion, the Nigerian delegation wishes to commend the draft resolutions contained in documents A/C.1/49/L.4 and A/C.1/49/L.12 to the Committee for adoption without a vote.

The Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Togo to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.26, on the United Nations Regional Centres.

Mr. Pennaneach (Togo) (*interpretation from French*): It is a great privilege for me to introduce, on behalf of the Chairman of the Group of African States and the sponsors belonging to other regional groups, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/49/L.26, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, and United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean".

This draft, prepared under agenda item 63 (e), entitled "Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly", is sponsored by Gambia, on behalf of all the African States, and by 29 other States of Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.

Established, respectively, in 1986, 1987 and 1989, the three Regional Centres are basically charged with providing States, at their request, with operational support for any initiatives they might undertake in order to pursue peace, disarmament, arms limitation and development. From that standpoint, the Centres have had to disseminate, *inter alia*, information on peace, disarmament and security for Governments, students, researchers and other interested individuals and legal entities. They have also organized many seminars, held conferences and carried out studies.

Full information on the functioning and programmes of activities of the three regional centres is contained in the report of the Secretary-General on this item (A/49/389), dated 15 September 1994, which shows that the Centres' programmes are quite ambitious and that their implementation requires considerable resources.

But, as members are aware, the problems encountered by the Centres over the past few years have compelled them to slow down their work, and thus many projects have not been implemented for lack of resources, both human and financial. The Centres were set up on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions. However, so-called existing resources are now hardly available at all, and voluntary contributions are scarce. The Regional

Centres are external services of the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, of which they are an integral part, and their role today is vital, particularly in preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

On 16 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 48/76 E, in which, while appealing to Member States, international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations to make voluntary contributions, it requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide all necessary support to the regional centres in carrying out their programmes of activities. The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/49/L.26, which it is my honour to introduce today, was prepared on the same lines. The result of a series of consultations and an exchange of views between interested delegations, it is virtually identical to resolution 48/76 E, which was adopted last year by consensus.

The only new element — which is really not a new idea but is part of past practice and derives from logic — is the request in operative paragraph 6 to the Secretary-General that the Directors of the Regional Centres should be locally based in order to revitalize the activities of the Centres and avoid long-distance management from New York, which studies show does not promote either their influence or their efficiency. The request in paragraph 6 is intended to promote the revitalization of the activities of the Regional Centres. Moreover, it is in accordance with the rules of decentralization and good management, based on the principle of bringing the administration nearer to the administered.

Implementing this request should, in principle, create no special problem, to the extent that the host Governments have already made available or could make available to the United Nations, free of charge, premises to house the offices of the centres and to serve as residences for the Directors and members of their families.

In view of this, the sponsors would like, through me, to call on all delegations to be more concerned about the problem of the Regional Centres, which, in the final analysis, are our own instruments for promoting peace, security, disarmament and development at the national, subregional and regional levels.

The sponsors hope that their appeal will be heard by everyone so that the draft resolution may again be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): I wish to comment on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/49/L.26 on the United Nations Regional Centres for peace and disarmament, which was introduced by the representative of the Republic of Togo.

During the general debate in the Committee many delegations expressed their views on the importance of regional arms control and disarmament efforts in achieving the objective of general and complete disarmament.

In this context, mydelegation is also of the view that the role of the Regional Centres for peace and disarmament is very crucial inasmuch as they provide the necessary forums for informal but in-depth exchanges of views by experts, diplomats and academics on various aspects of regional strategic and security issues.

The activities of the Regional Centres are also helpful in creating a favourable atmosphere for preventive diplomacy by facilitating and broadening understanding among the States of the region. Initiatives and activities which are mutually agreed upon by countries of the subregions and regions contribute to the development of effective confidence-building measures.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/49/389. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific has already organized in various cities in Asia several meetings of experts on disarmament issues. The Secretary-General recognized the activities of the Asia-Pacific Centre as the "Kathmandu process" in his report.

As the host country of the Asia-Pacific Centre, Nepal is fully aware of the excellent work being done by the Centre and believes that its potential could be enhanced to better serve the purpose of regional disarmament. I therefore take this opportunity to appeal for more financial support, which alone will enable the Centre to undertake the activities expected of it in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Government of Nepal expresses its willingness to further extend support to the Centre in every possible way within its limited resources. My delegation is likewise of the view that enough personnel support needs to be provided to the Centres in order to revitalize their programme of activities.

These issues are addressed in draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.26. My delegation, together with the other sponsors, hopes that it will be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Guillen Salas (Peru) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The delegation of Peru supports the statements made by the representatives of Togo and Nepal on draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.26, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific and United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean".

My delegation is of the view that the regional centres give valuable support to the disarmament process and facilitate the formulation of effective confidence-building measures for strengthening peace and security.

We also believe that United Nations support and voluntary contributions by Member States and non-governmental organizations are vital for carrying out the tasks performed by the Regional Centres. In this regard, the Secretary-General's report (A/49/389) on the activities of the disarmament Centres notes the severe financial limitations affecting the Centres. We believe that the future work of the Centres requires adequate financial resources and permanent leadership.

We feel that clear, stable leadership will make it possible to revitalize the Centres' functioning and programmes of activities. Despite their limitations, the Centres have succeeded in becoming the conduit for an interesting flow of ideas and thoughts about the need for, and advantages of, regional disarmament, peace and security.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean is to be seen in this context. It has promoted the publication of studies on disarmament and cooperated with the Organization of American States in holding the meeting of experts on "Confidence-building measures and security mechanisms in the region" in Buenos Aires in March this year. It also contributed to organizing a second regional seminar for Latin America and the Caribbean on national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which took place in September this year in Lima, Peru.

We feel that this interesting effort by the Regional Centre can be expanded, not only as an effective means of disseminating information about the work and progress made by the United Nations in the field of disarmament, but also to make possible the inclusion of other crucial issues that reflect each region's particular characteristics in the areas of peace, security and development. In the final analysis, it is a question of a basic contribution to the Agenda for Peace and the Agenda for Development.

Our delegation hopes that the draft resolution, like last year's, will be adopted by consensus.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I call on the representative of Afghanistan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.40, entitled "Measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms".

Mr. Ghafoorzai (Afghanistan): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the delegations of Colombia, Sudan, Zimbabwe and my own country, Afghanistan, draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.40, submitted under agenda item 62 (h), entitled "Measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms".

This draft resolution is self-explanatory and does not require a long introduction. For some time the international community has been concerned about the illicit availability and transfer of massive quantities of arms. At its last session the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/75, which was based on several resolutions that the Assembly had adopted by consensus at its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions.

Some groups have managed to obtain arms, often by indirect means, and sometimes with the help of certain States. This phenomenon has greatly contributed to violations of human rights and destabilization activities and has had a marked effect on internal conditions in the States concerned.

Recognizing these realities and the fact that curbing illicit arms transfers would make an important contribution to the relaxation of tension and to peaceful reconciliation processes, and on the basis of the conviction that peace and security are essential to economic development and reconstruction, the countries listed as sponsors in document A/C.1/49/L.40 decided to present this draft resolution.

With regard to reconciliation processes, I should like to add that dialogue, negotiation, mediation and arbitration have long proved their worth when it comes to re-establishing or securing justice. However, the availability of massive quantities of illicit arms encourages certain groups to resort to arms and bloodshed, instead of relying on peaceful measures.

By adopting this draft resolution, the General Assembly would invite the Disarmament Commission to

expedite its consideration of the agenda item on international arms transfers, with special emphasis on the adverse consequences of the illicit transfer of arms and ammunition, and to study measures to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms.

Through operative paragraph 2 the General Assembly would invite Member States to provide the Secretary-General with relevant information on national measures on arms transfers, with a view to preventing illicit transfers. It would also request the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on effective ways and means of collecting illegal weapons — a matter of serious concern to a number of countries, especially those that are experiencing national crises and wars — as well as on concrete proposals with regard to measures, at the national, regional and international levels, to curb the illicit transfer and use of conventional arms.

We also request the Secretary-General to study, within the existing resources and, of course, at the request of the Member States concerned, the possibility of collecting illicit arms, in the light of the experience gained by the United Nations.

I should like to state, in conclusion, that this draft resolution has been the subject of a number of informal consultations. It is the expectation of the sponsors that it will be adopted by consensus.

The Chairman *(interpretation from Spanish):* I call on the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.23, entitled "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects".

Mr. Ekwall (Sweden): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.23, on the "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects", often referred to as the 1980 United Nations conventional-weapons Convention.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The purpose of the 1980 Convention is to place constraints upon the conduct of war. The Convention and its three annexed Protocols constitute an important part of international humanitarian law on armed conflict through restricting the use of certain conventional weapons. Developments since the adoption of the Convention in 1980 have, however, demonstrated the need to strengthen it.

On 22 December 1993 States parties to the Convention requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene, in conformity with article 8 of the Convention, a review conference of the Convention and to establish a group of governmental experts to prepare this conference. As a matter of priority, the Group was given the task of preparing concrete proposals for amendments to Protocol II of the Convention, for the purpose of:

> strengthening restrictions on the use of anti-personnel mines and, in particular, those without neutralizing or self-destruction mechanisms;
>
> considering the establishment of a verification system for the provisions of this Protocol;
>
> studying opportunities for broadening the scope of this Protocol to cover armed conflicts that are not of an international character.

Three meetings have been held by the group of governmental experts, and a fourth session is scheduled for January next year. At the last meeting of the group, it was decided to hold the review conference in Geneva from 25 September to 13 October 1995.

Significant progress has been made at the meetings of the governmental experts. The issue of anti-personnel land-mines has been given priority. In his statement in this Committee at its 12th meeting, on 3 November, the Chairman of the group, Mr. Johan Molander, reported on the state of negotiations.

In the report of the Secretary-General on assistance in mine clearance (A/49/357 and Add.1) it is estimated that there are more than 110 million land-mines spread in 64 countries around the world, and that between 2 million and 5 million more are being laid each year. Through their indiscriminate effects, anti-personnel land-mines predominantly affect the civilian population, causing death, injuries and the devastation of large areas of land. As the

Secretary-General pointed out in a recent article in *Foreign Affairs*, there is today a global land-mine crisis. And while it began as a military problem, it is now an ongoing humanitarian disaster. In this context, it is vital that mine clearance activities be substantially increased to relieve the suffering. Another important element is the declaration by States of moratoriums on the export of anti-personnel land-mines. On 3 November, Senator Patrick Leahy, of the United States of America, introduced in this Committee the draft resolution on this issue.

It is as important, or even more important, to address the question how States at the Review Conference of the 1980 Convention on conventional weapons can — and I quote the Secretary-General:

> "rise to the humanitarian challenge, developing and endorsing a set of provisions which would effectively eliminate the threat of land-mines".

Categories of weapons, other than land-mines, have also been discussed at the meetings of the governmental experts under the 1980 Convention. Proposals for additional protocols to the Convention have been submitted by Switzerland, on small-calibre weapons, and by Sweden, on anti-personnel use of laser beams and naval mines.

The 1980 Convention on conventional weapons entered into force more than 10 years ago, yet only 42 States have so far ratified it. Consequently, the General Assembly would urgently call upon all States that have not yet done so to take all measures to become parties to the Convention as soon as possible so that ultimately access to this instrument will be universal.

The General Assembly would also welcome the request made by States Parties to the Secretary-General to convene a conference to review the Convention, and to establish a group of governmental experts to prepare the conference. It would take note with satisfaction of the progress made by the group of governmental experts on reviewing Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices and in discussing weapon categories at present not covered by the Convention.

Furthermore, the Assembly would take note of the decision by the group of governmental experts to request the Secretary-General to convene the review conference in Geneva within the time-frame 25 September to 13 October 1995. It would call upon the maximum number of States to attend the conference, to which the States parties may invite interested non-governmental organizations, in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross.

On behalf of the sponsors, I express the hope that draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.23 will be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Ramaker (Netherlands): Over the years, the Netherlands has supported the Swedish position on the issue before us. Today I wish to underline the increasing importance of the Convention for what can be called the humanitarian law of warfare. Now, more than ever, it deserves the full attention of this Committee.

The Convention, which came into force in 1983, has received fairly standardized treatment in the First Committee for years. Since last year, however, it has attracted considerable attention, inasmuch as it is one of the very few international arrangements which deal with the issue of the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel land-mines, a problem whose urgency has become manifest, inasmuch as the world has discovered to what extent these mines harm civilian populations and undermine the economic viability of certain areas, if not the development of some countries as a whole.

Over recent weeks many speakers have addressed the problems posed by anti-personnel land-mines, a clear sign of the growing awareness within the international community that urgent action is called for. In this respect, thus far three draft resolutions have been submitted at this session related to the issue of anti-personnel land-mines. One is draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.19, sponsored by the United States, on export moratoriums. The second is the draft resolution on assistance in mine clearance, sponsored by the European Union, which is being discussed in plenary meetings of the General Assembly. The present Swedish draft resolution focuses on the strengthening of the inhumane weapons Convention, and in particular, its provisions in Protocol II concerning anti-personnel land-mines.

While other draft resolutions relate to export moratoriums and mine clearance, draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.23 deals with the strengthening of an international regime tackling the problem of anti-personnel land-mines from the viewpoint of international law. Apart from the need to find practical solutions to the grave problems posed by the presence of millions of land-mines all over the world, this legal angle is also important, since in many cases it is the indiscriminate use of these mines

that poses the greatest dangers to countries and civilian populations.

This means that national moratoriums on exports are not enough. The use of anti-personnel land-mines has to be bound by international rules of behaviour. Therefore, as Mr. Molander, Chairman of the group of governmental experts preparing the first review conference of the Convention, to be held in 1995, eloquently stated earlier this week, there is a need, first of all, for a much larger adherence to the Convention, and, secondly, for a further strengthening of the scope of, and compliance with, the Convention. In preparing for the review conference, the group of governmental experts has set out to do exactly that. The Netherlands delegation urges all participants in the group of experts to contribute to the successful conclusion of its preparatory work for the review conference.

It is reassuring to know that quite a number of States have recently indicated that they intend to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols, having become convinced of the contribution that the Convention can make to the strengthening of international humanitarian law. It is my hope that by the time of the first review conference in September 1995 a greatly enhanced body of States parties will get to work in order to hammer out a stronger, better Convention. This endeavour should, of course, not be confined to Protocol II on land-mines and booby traps, but should extend to other weapon categories not covered at present by the Convention: more specifically, the anti-personnel use of blinding laser weapons and naval mines.

Mr. Fox (Australia): I wish to speak briefly to lend our support to draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.23, on the inhumane weapons Convention, which Australia is very pleased to be sponsoring. Under the draft resolution the Secretary-General would be requested to convene a review conference on the Convention in September 1995. Australia is a strong supporter of both the Convention and the review process.

I would like to take this opportunity to compliment the Chairman of the group of governmental experts, Johan Molander, on his skilful guidance of the group as it proceeds with its work to develop proposals for consideration by the review conference on ways to strengthen and improve the Convention.

Australia is participating actively in the work of the group of experts. In our view, there is a pressing need to tighten the rules on the use of anti-personnel mines in particular and on their production and trade. There is also a need to strengthen the provisions of de-mining cooperation, so that civilians are not killed or injured long after conflicts are over and so that combatants are not unnecessarily killed or injured. We are pleased that there was a significant increase in the number of countries participating in the experts group at the August meeting this year, especially countries such as Cambodia, which have suffered terribly as a consequence of anti-personnel mines. We hope this trend will continue at the next meeting of the group of experts in January next year. We urge all States parties to participate in the work of the experts and in the Review Conference next year.

During the general debate we heard many expressions of concern about the indiscriminate effect of land-mines, especially on civilians. Australia shares these concerns. We are glad that the review process has prompted a number of States to ratify or accede to the Convention, but many countries that should already be parties, consistent with their concern about the land-mines problem, remain outside. The aim is universal adherence to the inhumane weapons Convention, which we regard as the authoritative international instrument covering land-mines. Efforts to regulate the use, production and export of land-mines are necessarily of a long-term nature and should in our view focus on this instrument. We urge all those Member States not yet parties to the Convention to seriously consider adhering to it, in keeping with their humanitarian concerns about the use of land-mines, before the review conference takes place, so that they can participate fully in its deliberations.

I commend draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.23 to the Committee.

The Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Indonesia to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/49/L.34, "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament"; A/C.1/49/L.35, "Relationship between disarmament and development"; A/C.1/49/L.36, "Request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons"; and A/C.1/49/L.38, "Bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament".

Mr. Soegarda (Indonesia): I am honoured and privileged to introduce four draft resolutions under the rubric of "General and complete disarmament".

The first draft resolution, A/C.1/49/L.38, entitled "Bilateral nuclear-arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament", is being introduced on behalf of the non-

aligned countries. The draft before us undoubtedly reflects the profound changes that have taken place in world affairs and the resulting shifts in perceptions and policies towards nuclear disarmament. Such a transition is particularly manifest in agreements to limit and reduce nuclear armaments, including the signing of START II last January by the United States of America and the Russian Federation, which provides for significant reductions in the world's two biggest nuclear arsenals.

The Assembly would also commend the decisions to eliminate certain categories of nuclear weapons and to seek cooperative efforts to ensure the safety, security and environmentally sound destruction of nuclear weapons. In this context, we hope that continued dialogue will lead to even farther-reaching results.

The draft emphasizes that nuclear disarmament remains one of the principal tasks of our times, and in this context calls for the intensification of efforts to bring into force, at the earliest possible date, agreements already entered into. At the same time, it points out the responsibility of all States for contributing to arms reductions and disarmament.

The draft is the outcome of determined efforts by the non-aligned countries and in our view warrants the broad and continued support of member States in this Committee. We also believe that on an issue of such importance as nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament the international community, through the General Assembly, should speak with a unified voice. Such a stance would provide further impetus to the efforts of the two major Powers to reduce their levels of nuclear armaments and thus contribute to the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons. It is in this spirit that we commend the draft for unanimous adoption.

The second draft resolution, A/C.1/49/L.35, entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development", is also introduced on behalf of the non-aligned countries.

Mr. Tanaka (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

As in the past, the draft resolution is essentially procedural in nature. In it the Assembly welcomes the report of the Secretary-General and actions taken in accordance with the Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in 1987. It requests him to continue his endeavours to implement the action programme adopted by the Conference and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

It is our belief that the relationship between disarmament and development has gained new momentum because of the expectations of a peace dividend; hence its importance to the non-aligned countries. We hope that the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

The third draft resolution, concerning a request for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, contained in document A/C.1/49/L.36, is introduced on behalf of the non-aligned countries.

It is undeniable that throughout history mankind has used every weapon invented, including nuclear weapons. The devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in terms of both immediate and long-term horror, provided a most poignant and practical demonstration of what is, by today's standards, not even considered a minimum destructive capability. It is perhaps one of the more ominous paradoxes of history that the horror and tragedy of these two events should have given rise to the compulsion to obtain these weapons in ever-increasing number and sophistication. It can therefore rightly be said that humanity continues to be confronted by the real danger of self-extinction.

In the face of the enormity of the destruction that would ensue from the use of nuclear weapons, the General Assembly has unequivocally pronounced that such unconscionable use constitutes not only a violation of the Charter, but also a crime against humanity. Yet strategic doctrines have yet to be renounced, even in the post-cold-war era. Further aggravating the situation is the steadfast refusal to provide assurances of the non-use of nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear-weapon States. Hence their use as a deliberate political choice remains a frightening possibility for a great majority of nations. Furthermore, a nuclear disaster triggered by technical malfunction, misinformation or human error cannot be ruled out.

Thus, as the draft resolution rightly notes, it is only through the complete elimination of nuclear weapons that the security of all nations can be ensured. But, despite the significant nuclear-arms limitation measures already achieved in recent times, the prospect of nuclear disarmament is not yet sure. Until then, the safety, security and survivability of all nations must be assured by banning the use of nuclear weapons.

The political, military and ethical questions concerning nuclear weapons have been dealt with on numerous occasions by the Member States. It is the legal implications of the use of nuclear weapons that have yet to be addressed and clarified. And it is in this context that a request is

made in the draft resolution for an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice.

The fourth draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/49/L.34, deals with the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Members may recall that six years have elapsed since the convening of the third special session in 1988. Since then the world has undergone profound changes and transformation in both the political landscape and the security environment. It has also been a time of intense activity in the areas of arms regulation and limitation, culminating in the conclusion of unprecedented disarmament agreements. We are encouraged by the progress being made in limiting nuclear, chemical and conventional armaments.

But the disarmament agenda is still unfinished; much more remains to be done. We are also aware of the need to broaden and deepen the dimensions of disarmament. Formidable obstacles to a nuclear-free world and to nuclear peace continue to exist, as large strategic forces are still maintained along with the untenable doctrines concerning their use. Accelerated efforts on the other priority issues are also needed, particularly for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. Further compounding the situation is the proliferation of sophisticated armaments, the qualitative improvement of weapons through testing, the accelerated momentum in arms sales and the relentless accumulation of conventional armaments that are the main instruments of local wars and armed conflicts. Meanwhile, world military expenditures continue to be disproportionate to the unmet and urgent needs of developmental assistance. Hence, we should seek new and more substantive disarmament measures by focusing attention on those issues that have already been identified by the international community as priority concerns. It is therefore opportune to undertake a comprehensive assessment of progress made towards global disarmament endeavours.

For that purpose, the United Nations is the most appropriate forum. To a greater extent than ever before, it should be utilized as a forum for action-oriented dialogue and negotiations so that the Organization will be able to make an ever-greater contribution to resolving the myriad of disarmament issues that still confront us. The fourth special session will offer a unique opportunity to do so. Hence, its convening is both timely and appropriate. Against this backdrop, it is the hope of non-aligned countries that the draft resolution will elicit the support of all Member States.

Mr. Stoian (Romania): I wish to address draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.12, introduced at the beginning of this meeting by the representative of Nigeria.

The United Nations plays an important and valuable role in global and regional disarmament information and studies. The many activities of the Organization in this field help to promote disarmament, non-proliferation, transparency and confidence-building. In this context, the United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services programme has a specific and prominent place, not only in education, but also in preparing specialists able to disseminate information and even to take part in decision-making processes. In this sense, the programme has already provided training for a considerable number of officials selected from various geographical regions, most of whom are now in positions of responsibility in the field of disarmament affairs in their respective countries. By the end of 1994 the programme will have provided training for a total of 378 government officials from 133 Member States. The progress achieved to date in many areas of multilateral disarmament has underlined the need for more specialists with diplomatic skills, such as those carefully trained through the United Nations disarmament fellowship programme.

The radical changes in Eastern Europe entail not only a political reorientation of all these countries but also a profound restructuring of their institutions specialized in international relations, including those specialized in the field of disarmament. In this context, a new generation of young diplomats come within the framework of these institutions. They need to be kept informed about disarmament; the United Nations fellowship, training and advisory services programme could play a decisive role in disseminating such information.

Romania is one of the countries which, a few years ago, benefited from the facilities provided by the programme, and the students concerned are now reliable experts in the Department for Disarmament of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. May I take this opportunity to thank those countries which contributed to the programme which made possible the specialization of these diplomats. My thanks go also to the Centre for Disarmament Affairs and personally to the Senior Coordinator of the Programme, Mr. Ogunsola Ogunbanwo, for the capable way in which the classes were organized.

Mr. Issa (Egypt): This year the delegation of Egypt is privileged to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.15, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" on behalf of a group of co-sponsors consisting of Algeria,

Bolivia, Brazil, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, Venezuela and my own delegation, Egypt.

Recent developments, which have heralded prospects for a new era of international cooperation, peace and security, have been accompanied by continued expenditure on research and development on weapons systems which could be placed in outer space and pose a serious threat to international security. The prevention of an arms race in outer space is of fundamental importance to the security of all States, whether or not they are space Powers.

This draft resolution, while reaffirming the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space, recognizes that the present legal regime applicable to outer space does not by itself guarantee the prevention of such a race. The 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies plays a significant role in governing activities pertaining to outer space. However, there is a need for the adoption of additional legal instruments to make up for the inadequacies of the current legislation, to strengthen the regime and to enhance its effectiveness.

At the request of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, the Conference on Disarmament considered the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space during its 1994 session, and for this purpose re-established the Ad Hoc Committee which was first established in 1985. The view widely held within the Ad Hoc Committee, and endorsed by the co-sponsors of this draft resolution, is that the conclusion of a relevant international agreement or agreements should remain the task of the Ad Hoc Committee, and that the specific proposals on confidence-building measures should form an integral part of such agreements. To this end the co-sponsors hoped that the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee would be extended so that it could complete its work in 1995. In addition, emphasis must be placed on the need for measures to ensure greater transparency, confidence and security regarding the peaceful use of outer space.

In conclusion, I express the hope that the overwhelming support traditionally received by similar draft resolutions will ultimately lead to the successful establishment of a comprehensive regime to ensure and encourage the peaceful use of outer space and prevent an arms race there.

Mr. Marín Bosch (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We are pleased to see you, Ambassador Tanaka, chairing our work here in New York.

This morning we have heard a series of statements highlighting the fact that the First Committee has a wide range of very important disarmament issues to discuss. We are searching for a way to channel the work of the international community on disarmament, and we are, in one way or another, establishing a new agenda on disarmament and arms control questions — hence, for instance, the importance of the proposal in draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.34, introduced by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the non-aligned group, on convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We feel certain that this could be an occasion to review what we are doing here and in other multilateral forums, particularly the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

I wish also to refer briefly to draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.18 and the amendments to it contained in document A/C.1/49/L 45. No one denies the importance of the subject of transparency in armament matters. Mexico has supported such transparency since we debated what became General Assembly resolution 46/36 L of 9 December 1991. What happened then — and we think should happen now — is that there was agreement when the draft resolution was adopted without a vote on establishing a Register of Conventional Arms but including weapons of mass destruction later. The co-sponsors are asking us now to continue for another year to speak of conventional weapons, which indeed are very important, but we are thereby omitting the other aspect of the agreement, concerning weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, we are involved in an annual exercise, both here in New York in groups of governmental experts, and in Geneva in an ad hoc committee on the matter, of speaking of the subject without making progress on something that we think should be included — transparency in the field of weapons of mass destruction. That is why the Mexican delegation and the delegations of Algeria, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar, Nigeria and Sri Lanka have presented the amendments in document A/C.1/49/L.45. The basic purpose of the amendments is very simple: to have expert groups in both Geneva and New York for a couple of years, to see how the Register of Conventional Arms is developing from time to time and also to afford an opportunity, particularly to those countries that possess weapons of mass destruction, to think a little more about the appropriateness of including more transparency on these subjects. Hence our amendment would call for the addition, at the end of operative paragraph 4(a), of the following:

"including its expansion to cover weapons of mass destruction".

The second amendment would make the present paragraph 4(b) much less ambitious and omit the expert group now proposed in draft resolution A/C.1/49/L.18.

The final amendment would delete the present operative paragraph 6, which reads

"*Encourages* the Conference on Disarmament to continue its work undertaken in the field of transparency in armaments".

The subject is "transparency in armaments" not transparency in conventional armaments.

My delegation would now like to introduce the draft decision in document A/C.1/49/L.24. Last year the Mexican delegation presented a draft resolution on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of vehicles for their delivery in all its aspects. We noted then that in the General Assembly everyone — Heads of State, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers — had been referring to the question of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of vehicles for their delivery in all its aspects but that, unfortunately, no one was willing to do anything about it. We felt, therefore, that perhaps we might provide the First Committee with an opportunity to explore further options in this connection.

The result was the adoption of resolution 48/75 C, in which the Secretary-General was requested to prepare a short report containing a brief description of the question for transmission to a representative intergovernmental group of experts. We also suggested that those experts be persons represented in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for having prepared such a report; unfortunately, it was never transmitted to any group of experts. We shall not dwell on the subject this year, but we feel that here, as with transparency in armaments, we should provide countries possessing weapons of mass destruction with an opportunity to give some thought to the direction our work is taking. We would therefore urge that this subject be included in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session.

We are confident that the draft decision will be adopted by the Committee without a vote. We often hear the word "consensus" about all kinds of matters, but the General Assembly rules do not contain the word with regard to taking decisions; draft resolutions may be adopted without a vote, with a vote, by acclamation or unanimously, but not by consensus.

The Chairman: I now call upon the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Kheradi (Secretary of the Committee): I should like to inform the Committee that the following draft resolutions now have the following additional sponsors:

A/C.1/49/L.1/Rev.1: Belgium and the Republic of Moldova

A/C.1/49/L.8: Nepal

A/C.1/49/L.9/Rev.1: Thailand

A/C.1/49/L.12: South Africa, Thailand, Guinea and Hungary

A/C.1/49/L.13: Ireland, Belgium, Croatia and Swaziland

A/C.1/49/L.15: Myanmar

A/C.1/49/L.18: South Africa and Guinea

A/C.1/49/L.19: Belgium, Chad and Guinea

A/C.1/49/L.21: Belarus, Czech Republic and Belgium

A/C.1/49/L.22: Guinea and Croatia

A/C.1/49/L.25: Ecuador

A/C.1/49/L.26: South Africa, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize and Brunei Darussalam and Uruguay

A/C.1/49/L.29: Nepal, Republic of Moldova, Czech Republic and Uruguay

A/C.1/49/L.30/Rev.1: Chad, Togo and Benin

A/C.1/49/L.31: Costa Rica

A/C.1/49/L.32: Costa Rica

A/C.1/49/L.44: Belgium and Hungary

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.